

these early and errant years. In one sense this reputation was wholly unjust; in another it had not been unprovoked nor, indeed, wholly undeserved. In his guiding principles and ideas he had changed far less than most of his judges and critics, but the world, which looks only to externals, saw that he had been in communication, if not in co-operation, with men at the opposite poles of politics, and drew its conclusions accordingly. He had been too eager in his desire for tangible and immediate success, too reckless in his disregard for the conventions of political life ; and he had thus aroused in many a distrust which he was never wholly to allay, and which to the very end of his days was to be a cause of weakness to himself and a formidable weapon at the disposal of his enemies.

To Sarah Disraeli.

Jan. 20, 1835.

Last Saturday a dinner by the Chancellor to Lord Abinger and the Barons of the Exchequer. There were also George Dawson, myself, Praed, young Gladstone, Sir M. Shee, Sir J. Beresford, and Pemberton: rather dull, but we had a swan very white and tender, and stuffed with truffles, the best company there.¹

In ' young Gladstone's' recollections of this dinner apparently neither the swan nor Disraeli found a place ; but he noted for his future guidance some counsel given them by Lyndhurst: ' Never clef end yourself before a popular assembly, except with and by retorting the attack ; the hearers, in the pleasure which the assault gives them, will forget the previous charge ' ² — a piece of wisdom which, if Disraeli failed to note it at the time, he was afterwards, as Lord Morley reminds us, to make his

¹ *Letters*, p. 90.

² Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, I., p. 122.